DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 182 723 CS 005 284

AUTHOR Avant, Glen R.
TITLE The Effect of an Individualized Reading Tutorial Program on the Locus of Control and Locus of Evaluation of Disabled Readers: An Update.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference (29th, San Antonio, TX, November 29-December 1, 1979)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education: Evaluation: *Individualized Reading: Learning Disabilities: *Locus of Control: Reading Achievement: *Reading Difficulty: Reading Instruction: *Reading Research: *Tutorial Programs: *Word Study Skills

ABSTRACT

Nineteen children, aged 7 through 17, were pretested, individually tutored in reading for 12 weeks, and posttested in a study to examine the effect of an individualized reading tutorial program on the locus of control and locus of evaluation of children with reading disabilities. A reliable, valid measure of locus of control and locus of evaluation was correlated with two measures of reading achievement (specifically, word attack skills). Both reading measures correlated significantly with the pretreatment affective measure of locus of control, as well as with the posttreatment locus of control measure. Locus of evaluation was not related to reading in either case. At the end of the reading program, there was no significant change in either locus of control or evaluation although there was a very high significant difference in reading ability. (Author/FL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED182723

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Glen R. Avant, Coordinator

Emory University Reading Center

Emory University

Atlanta, Georgia 30322

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Glen R. Avant

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The Effect of An Individualized Reading Tutorial Program on the Locus of Control and Locus of Evaluation of Disabled Readers: An Update

Glen R. Avant

Emory University

Paper presented at the National Reading Conference 29th Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, November 29, 1979.

CS005284

Introduction

One out of every four students is likely to experience some frustration in reading; however, current estimates are that school age children who have serious reading problems probably occur in three to five out of every one hundred students (Wilson, 1977, p. 4). Various kinds of developmental and remedial reading programs have been designed to help these students (Dallman, 1974; De Boer & Dallman, 1965; Dechant, 1970). Of these programs, individual tutoring has been shown to be an effective remediation technique for a variety of reading disabilities (Harris & Smith, 1972). This study is part of the on-going research to determine successful ways of teaching children to read, especially those children who have serious reading problems.

Overview

Reading and Locus of Control

Research studies support the belief that improved reading skills are directly related to academic achievement, role perception, and self-concept (Culver & Morgan, 1977; Ekwall, 1973, 1976; Stauffer, 1969; Wilson, 1977). There is further evidence that self-concept and sense of control are predictors of school success or failure (Miller & Woock, 1973).

A student's sense of control over events in his or her life may be viewed by that student as dependent on his or her personal behavior: this is internal locus of control. Conversely, a student's belief that events in his or her life are controlled by luck, chance, or other individuals is considered external locus of control(Rotter, 1966). Some studies support evidence that people who perceive themselves as having control over events in their personal world spend more time in intellectual

activities and exhibit more intense interest in academic pursuits (Joe, 1971) and that locus of control is predictive to social behavior, learning performance, and achievement-related activities (Lefcourt, 1968). A logical extension would be to expect children who are failing or not achieving in school to be externals. Shaw and Uhl (1971) found that the higher the external score, the lower the reading score, suggesting that students with external control are not able to see reward contingencies and react to them, as well as fail to recognize rewards available to them. Not only has it been noted that locus of control is one of the non-cognitive factors significantly affecting learning abilities and achievement (Mathis & James, 1972; McWilliams & McWilliams, 1977); but studies regarding reading achievement specifically, support the view that internally controlled students make the greatest gains (Brandt, 1975), and that there is significant relationship between locus of control and reading achievement (Morgan & Culver, 1978; Varadi, 1974).

Conversely, Miller (1963) reported that, when using standardized tests, no reliable relationship was found between locus of control and generalized academic achievement in a "middle-class population when mental age effects were partialed out;" possibly the standardized tests that were used were not sensitive enough to measure the change in performance of a middle-class population which had been favorably influenced to the academic tasks (p. 48).

Reading and Locus of Evaluation

Sebeson (Ekwall, 1973) relates self-esteem and reading disabilities: Reading, because of its importance in society, assumes great importance as a developmental task, and failure to master it may interfere with the development of a child's self-esteem.

The internalizing of standards or values by which a person evaluates his actions is internal locus of evaluation; the dependency of a person or an external frame of reference is external locus of evaluation (Miller, 1963). Whether or not a person believes he or she is responsible for the reinforcement is a dimension of a person's percept of his or her role in his or her environment. Locus of evaluation appears to be related to self-esteem because it is a value judgment, an evaluation of one's own relative effect on controlling the environment (self-evaluation) (Marsh, 1975).

Reading and the Learning Environment

Most of the reported studies which examined locus of control and reading achievement were in traditional learning environments such as one-to-many (one teacher with many children) instructional situations. However, one study comparing a one-to-one (one teacher with one child) tutorial environment and a one-to-many instructional situation (McWilliams & Mc Williams, 1976), concluded that one-to-one instruction is more effective in producing a change toward internality. Furthermore, children with relatively high locus of control make better achievement gains under individualized treatment (Annesley, 1974, p.194).

A learning environment which increases a student's ability to be successful in reading is the type that should be set up in a tutorial program for disabled readers. Lefcourt's (1966) literature review implies that people who attempt to overcome their difficulties are oriented toward high internal control and that success will change a person in the direction of more internal orientation. If locus of control can be manipulated in a tutorial reading situation, then teachers could design

and modify their teaching strategies to help students' role perception as well as their reading skills.

Purpose

Therefore, a study was begun in September 1978 to examine the effect of an individualized reading tutorial program on children's locus of control and locus of evaluation (Avant & Weber, 1979). Analysis of the data after 12 weeks of individual instruction suggested that disabled readers vary in levels of locus of control and locus of evaluation; their reading accuracy predicts internal locus of control; and their reading comprehension is related to their locus of control at the end of that period of instruction. However, neither locus of control, locus of evaluation, nor reading scores changed significantly over the 12-week period of individualized instruction, although there was a movement toward internality as well as significant reading improvement. Furthermore, Avant and Weber (1979) implied that the reading test used to determine reading progress probably did not adequately assess some basic skills which were being taught in the program and, consequently, being improved upon, such as sight words, phonics, structural analysis, and fundamental letter-sound associations. Theoretically, with apparent reading skills improvement (assessed by a more appropriate test), there would be significant increase of internal control; with a sense of control or influence over learning, there would be success.

Thus, further investigation was planned and executed to address the limitations and needs for additional research as indicated in the previous study. The major purpose of this study was to examine the effect of an individualized reading tutorial program on the locus of control and locus of evaluation of disabled readers.

Methodology

Sample

The sample consisted of 26 school-age subjects (males and females) enrolled in an individualized tutorial reading program. Enrollment was initiated by parents. The subjects were referred to the program because of various reading disabilities. No control over demographic or socio-economic characteristics was possible. At the time of pretesting, the age range of the subjects was 7 years to 17 years.

Treatment

The treatment consisted of individualized reading tutoring. The time of instruction varied among children from 12 to 50 sessions. Each session of fifty-minutes varied in content and materials, characterized by one-to-one techniques (Avant & Weber, 1979, p. 34-35) based on the student's individual reading problem(s). Teachers were graduate level students majoring in reading, trained to emphasize self-direction, to lead students to believe they themselves have much influence over their own learning, and to help students accept personal responsibility for their success or failure.

Instrumentation

The Miller-Avant Locus of Evaluation-Control Scale. The Miller-Avant Locus of Evaluation-Control (M-A-LOE-C), a forty-six item scale, yields reliability estimates of .76 for locus of evaluation factor and .85 for locus of control factor by Cronbach's Alpha formula for homogeneous tests. Each subscale contains items which specifically relate to academics or or beliefs about reading. Research supports the validity and reliability of this measure which was developed for this study. The uniqueness of the M-A-LOE-C Scale is that it simultaneously assesses locus of evaluation,

locus of control, and beliefs in reinforcement in reading achievement situations. This test is externally scored.

The Roswell-Chall Diagnostic Reading Test of Word Analysis Skills was designed to evaluate the weaknesses and strengths of basic word analysis and word recognition skills of children, and adults who read from second to sixth grade levels. The test, a valid and reliable measure, isolates difficulties and can be used as a formative and summative evaluation (Roswell & Chall, 1978). Higher scores mean more errors(for this study).

The Emory Inventory of Basic Reading Skills is a practical, diagnostic inventory which is presently being developed to provide a valid, reliable measure of a student's knowledge, understanding, and skill of word analysis (Avant, 1979). Errors are counted: higher scores indicate more errors.

Procedure

Upon entrance in an individualized reading tutorial program in September 1979, each student was administered the M-A-LOE-C (1978) and the two reading tests. After twelve weeks (see Treatment), every child was readministered the M-A-LOE-C and the two reading tests. Each reading test consists of Forms A and B. In order to examine the relationship of pretreatment reading and pretreatment locus of evaluation/control, as well as posttreatment reading and posttreatment locus of evaluation/control, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used. In order to examine the effect of the tutorial reading treatment on locus of evaluation/control, a *t* test for dependent samples was used; the hypotheses tested were: posttreatment affective variable(s) will be equal to or greater than (more external than) pretreatment affective variables.

Results and Conclusions

Research supports that locus of control is a significant variable related to reading achievement and should be considered in developing strategies for individual reading instruction of the reading disabled child. A reliable, valid measure of locus of control and locus of evaluation, The Miller-Avant Locus of Evaluation-Control Scale, was correlated with two measures of reading achievement, specifically word-attack skills. Both measures, the Roswell-Chall Test of Basic Word Analysis Skills and The Emory Inventory of Basic Word Attack Skills correlated significantly with the pretreatment affective measure of locus of control (Table 1), as well as the posttreatment locus of control (Table 2). Locus of evaluation was not related to reading in either case; relationship between locus of control and locus of evaluation was substantiated, however, as in previous research (Avant & Weber, 1979).

After twelve weeks of instruction, posttest data was gathered to determine if individual tutoring of disabled readers made a difference in the sense of control or evaluation of their reading situation. The results suggest that disabled readers vary in the levels of locus of control and evalution; these students as a group were far below the mean of the affective measurement which was scored toward externality. These students appeared to evaluate their actions by internal values and to believe in internal control of reinforcement. At the end of reading program, there was no significant change in either locus of control or evaluation although there was a very high significant difference in reading ability (Table 3).

Since locus of control correlated significantly with pre- and posttreatment reading, further research of this noncognitive construct may provide additional insight into reading difficulties and remedial reading programs.

References

Annesley, F. R. A study of the relationship between normal and behavior problem children on reading achievement, intelligence, self concept, locus of control. Slow Learning Child, November 1974, 21(3), 183-196.

Avant, G. R. The development of an experimental form of the Emory inventory of word analysis skills. Unpublished manuscript, Emory University, 1979.

Avant, G. R., & Weber, M. B. The effect of individual reading instruction on locus of control and locus of evaluation. Atlanta, Ga.: Emory University, 1979. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 167 989)

Brandt, J. D. Internal versus external locus of control and performance in controlled and motivated reading-rate improvement instruction. Journal of Counseling Psychology, September 1975, 22(5), 377-382.

Culver, V. I., & Morgan, R. F. The relationship of locus of control to reading achievement. Norfork, Va.: Old Dominion University, 1977. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 142 986)

Dallman, M., Rouch, R. L., Chang, L. Y. C., & DeBoer, J. J. The teaching of reading (4th ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1974.

DeBoer, J. J., & Dallman, M. The teaching of reading. (Rev. ed.) New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1965.

Dechant, E. V. Improving the teaching of reading (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970.

Ekwall, E. E. Diagnosis and remediation of the disabled reader. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1976.

Ekwall, E. E. Psychological factors in the teaching of reading. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1973.

Harris, L. A., & Smith, C. B. Individualizing reading instruction: A reader. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972.

Joe, V. A. Review of the internal-external control construct as a personality variable. Psychological Reports, 1971, 28, 619-640.

Lefcourt, H. M. Internal vs. external locus of control of reinforcement: A review. Psychological Bulletin, 1966, 65, 206-220.

Marsh, L. K. Self-esteem, achievement, responsibility, and reading achievement of lower-class Black, White, and Hispanic seventh-grade boys (Doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1975). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1975, 35, 6514A-6515A.

Mathis, R. W., & James, W. H. Internal-external control as an environmental variable in listening. Journal of Experimental Education, 1972, 40(3), 60-63.

McWilliams, L., & McWilliams, P. What are reading teachers doing to their students' personalities? Reading Improvement, 1976, 13(3), 174-179.

Miller, H. L., & Woock, R. R. Social foundations of urban education (2nd ed.). Hindale: Dryden, 1973.

Miller, J. O. Role perception and reinforcement conditions in discrimination among culturally deprived and non-deprived children. (Doctoral dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers). Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1963. No. 64-5086.

Morgan, R. F., & Culver, V. I. Locus of control and reading achievement: Applications for the classroom. Journal of Reading, February 1978, 21(5) 403-408.

Roswell, F., & Chall, J. Roswell-Chall diagnostic reading test of word analysis skills (Revised and Extended). La Jolla, Ca.: Essay, 1978.

Rotter, J. B. Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. Psychological Monographs: General and Applied, 1966, 80, No. 1. (Whole no. 609).

Shaw, R., & Uhl, N. Control of reinforcement and academic achievement. Journal of Educational Research, 1970, 64(5), 226-228.

Stauffer, R. Directing reading maturity as a cognitive process. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Wilson, R. M. Diagnostic and remedial reading for classroom and clinic (3rd ed.). Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1977.

Varadi, M .M . Achievement responsibility, attainment values, task persistence and academic achievement of Black fifth-grade boys. (Doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1974). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1974, 34, 3512B .

Table 1

Correlation Coefficients of Pretreatment Variables

N = 26

Variables	Emory A	Emory B	M-A-LOE	M-A-LOC	Roswell-Chall(A)
Age	-.51**	-.53**	-.38*	-.37*	-.44*
Emory A		.99***	.05	.45*	.92***
Emory B			.03	.45*	.91***
M-A-LOE				.41*	.14
M-A-LOC					.53**

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Table 2

Correlation Coefficients of Posttreatment Variables

N = 22

Variables	Emory A	Emory B	M-A-LOE	M-A- LOC	Roswell-Chall(B)
Time	.17	.15	-.002	.30	.10
Age	-.47*	-.51**	-.27	-.35	-.42*
Emory A		.98***	.12	.61***	.94***
Emory B			.10	.53**	.91***
M-A-LOE				.55**	.18
M-A-LOC					.53**

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations

	Pretreatment (N=26)		Posttreatment (N=22)[6]		
Variables	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
M-A-LOE [1]	7.96	4.34	7.64	4.17	.23
M-A-LOC [2]	7.62	3.59	7.91	5.05	-.46
Emory A [3]	51.77	49.76	37.91	39.30	4.33***
Emory B [4]	50.58	48.52	36.95	37.52	4.20***
Roswell-Chall[5]	16.69	21.19	10.14	11.98	3.25**
Age	11.85	2.82			

* $p < .05$ ** p .01 *** p .001

[1] 22-item measure

[2] 24-item measure

[3] 243-item measure

[4] 240-item measure

[5] 83-item measure

[6] For various reasons, four subjects in sample were not posttested.